

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-6, and 8-15 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 5, 8-10, and 15 have been amended. Claim 7 has been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 7 and 12-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, but would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection(s) and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

The specification stands objected to for some informalities. In response, Applicant has amended the specification as suggested by the Examiner. More specifically, the use of the trademark VELCRO has been capitalized wherever it appears in the specification.

Claims 8-9 stand objected to due to some informalities. In response, Applicant has amended claims 8-9 as suggested by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the objection of claims 8-9 is respectfully requested.

Claims 5, 7, and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. In response, Applicant has amended claims 5 and 9-10 to provide further clarification as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 7 has been canceled, thus rendering the rejection thereof moot. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 5, 7, and 9-10 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 10, and 14-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,161,855 to Harmon in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,516,188 to Bruhnke et al. ("Bruhnke"). In response, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to include the features of dependent claim 7. Claim 7 has been indicated by the Examiner to

represent allowable subject matter. In addition, Applicant has amended independent claims 15 in similar fashion to independent claim 1. More specifically, independent 15 has been amended to include features of dependent 7. Claim 7 has been indicated by the Examiner to represent allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 15 distinguish over Harmon and Bruhnke and are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 3-5, 10, and 14 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 3-5, 10, and 14 also distinguish over Harmon and Bruhnke. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent 3-5, 10, and 14 is respectfully requested.

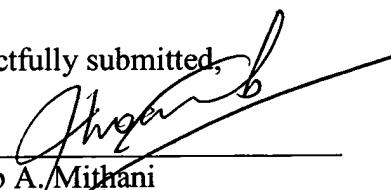
Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harmon in view of Bruhnke and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,292,176 to Artz (“Artz”). Dependent claim 6 depends from and further restricts independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claim 6 also distinguish over Harmon and Bruhnke. Artz fails to cure the deficiencies of Harmon and Bruhnke noted above. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 6 is respectfully requested.

Claims 8-9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harmon in view of Bruhnke and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,678,891 to O’Neill et al. (“O’Neill”). Dependent claims 8-9 and 11 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 8-9 and 11 also distinguish over Harmon and Bruhnke. O’Neill fails to cure the deficiencies of Harmon and Bruhnke noted above. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent 8-9 and 11 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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